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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the history of diversity, equality, and black studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston from the perspective of a professor who helped found the Black Studies Department and worked to promote gender equity. When he first arrived in 1970, Boston was segregated, and there were few black faculty members. He joined forces with a female professor who was concerned about the problems of women on campus, and established the first Affirmative Action Task Force there. They also established a Black Studies program within the department of Sociology. A few additional faculty and staff of color were hired, and an active Black Faculty and Staff caucus was organized. With pressure and assistance from this group, the first person of color was hired as Associate Provost. The professor served on many campus committees to give a voice to the concerns of people of color. The William Monroe Trotter Institute was founded in the 1980s. It assumed leadership in conducting a balanced, objective assessment of the status of Black Americans. It also established a journal, the Trotter Review. By the 1980s, the number of racially diverse faculty members had grown significantly, as had the number of female faculty and staff. (SM)

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TROTTER INSTITUTE

The African-American Experience at the University of Massachusetts Boston: *Challenges and Future Directions*

James E. Blackwell

OCCASIONAL PAPER

WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER INSTITUTE
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The African-American Experience at the University of Massachusetts Boston: *Challenges and Future Directions*

James E. Blackwell

Fall 1999

This paper is based on a special lecture co-sponsored by the William Monroe Trotter Institute, the Department of Sociology and the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus of the University of Massachusetts Boston on September 30, 1998 as part of the commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Africana Studies Department. Dr. James E. Blackwell is Professor of Sociology, Emeritus.

Opening Remarks

Dr. Harold Horton, Associate Director, Trotter Institute

It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to welcome you to our special lecture today, which will be presented by a very distinguished gentleman. I won't take time to try to single out any particular individuals because there are so very many fine people here today. We are especially appreciative of all the students who are here and everyone else who has come to listen to today's presentation. I really don't think that you would want to be any other place today, at this time, other than here.

Dr. Jennings is going to introduce the speaker, so at this time I would like to present to you the Director of the Trotter Institute, Dr. James Jennings.

Tribute and Introduction

Dr. James Jennings, Director, Trotter Institute

Thank you very much, Dr. Harold Horton. And I want to thank the audience also for attending the event today. We're very excited about the words and discussions that you will be a part of today. I also want to take this opportunity to extend thanks to the co-sponsors of this event, the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus, the Sociology Department, the Africana Studies Department, and the Trotter Institute. Before I introduce the speaker, I would like to thank Professor Robert Dentler, Professor Emeritus in Sociology. Would you raise your hand, Professor Dentler? He's also a Faculty Associate of the Trotter Institute and another giant in the civil rights struggle in this country.

Although Professor Ed Strickland, who passed away a few weeks ago, is not physically here today, his spirit is certainly with us.

Before introducing our colleague and guest to you, let me say a few words about today's event. This event emerged in part from several meetings held by the Black Faculty /Staff Caucus last year. A number of individuals felt that it was time to begin thinking about new challenges facing our campus, in particular, to

insuring that the idea of racial and gender diversity and excellence is not minimized intentionally or inadvertently, and to enhancing the quality of academic and intellectual services and products available to neighborhoods. As we pondered about the gains that we have accomplished in the past and considered how to play a leadership role in moving the campus forward in terms of excellence in research, teaching and public service within the context of urban mission, it was unanimously agreed that the individual whom you will hear from today could give us some pointers. We have invited Dr. Blackwell to share some of his thoughts about race and diversity in higher education with us. After his presentation, Professor Jemadari Kamara, Chair of the Africana Studies Department, will moderate a short discussion on some of the issues raised. We also will take an opportunity today to honor this year's Blackwell Fellow.

One reason I am honored to introduce Professor James E. Blackwell to you is that his career is a paragon showing that there is absolutely no contradiction between excellence in teaching and research on one hand, and commitment to public service and social justice on the other hand. Professor Blackwell has shown us that one can integrate these areas to reflect the highest professional standards in ways that serve people. Yes, Professor Blackwell has published numerous books that have won prestigious awards. Yes, Professor Blackwell has published more than 65 journal articles and chapters in textbooks and anthologies. And yes, Professor Blackwell has been recognized as one of the nation's most distinguished sociologists and social scientists, receiving this campus' Chancellor's Medal, the Distinguished Scholar Award, and the Merit Award from the Eastern Sociological Society; the Spivak Award and the DuBois-Johnson-Frazier Award from the American Sociological Association.

But while Professor Blackwell was being recognized for his scholarship and research, he was also busy mentoring undergraduate and graduate students on this campus and other institutions as well. He was also busy challenging and confronting racism, whether on or off campus, in the areas of education, housing, and civil rights. On our campus, under his leadership, the Sociology Department became one of the strongest and well-respected departments as a model for both scholarship and racial and gender diversity.

He established the very first Black Faculty and Staff Caucus on this campus. He played a founding and key role in establishing the Black Studies Department that is now the Africana Studies Department. He was a major player, a critical player, and a key player, in establishing the Institute for the Study of Black Culture in 1984, which today is the William Monroe Trotter Institute.

Professor Blackwell played a leading role in assisting the campus, its colleges and departments to begin thinking and acting on the importance of racial and gender diversity on our campus. And I can tell you from personal experience that he played a leading role in moving the campus to make its very first appointment of a Black dean -- me -- in 1983, you know -- more than two decades after the campus was officially founded. It is the example that he set for me that inspired and motivated me to at least try to do the right thing about issues related to racial and gender diversity on our campus. I will end my brief introduction by noting that many people of color and others on this campus may not have ever met Professor Blackwell. But I can assure you that the presence of these individuals, as well as the progressive things that our campus is known for, has much to do with the struggles and commitment to racial diversity and social justice pursued by Professor Blackwell at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. This is why so many of us are excited that Professor Blackwell will be sharing some of his thoughts with us today. Professor Blackwell, thank you.

The African-American Experience at the University of Massachusetts Boston: Recollections of the Founding of the Black Studies Department

Thank you very much, James. And as the song goes, "If you don't know me by now…!"

Let me say, it's a real pleasure to have the opportunity to come back to UMass Boston and to meet and see so many friends that I've had for almost thirty years. A real pleasure! I'm honored that all of you thought enough of me to invite me back to this campus. I want to share some experiences with you today that somewhat reflect on the major topic that James outlined, but also set the tone for what I believe should be done in the future. Most of this is personal.

I arrived on this campus in August 1970 after having been recruited from Case Western Reserve University. I came to UMass Boston to join what was then the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Little did I know then that I had accepted a position at one of the greatest hotbeds of academic politics and contentiousness that anyone could have ever imagined, especially for a university as small as this one was at that time.

As some of you will recall, the center of the campus was 100 Arlington Street. The Sociology Department was located in the old Salada Tea building on Stuart Street. Classes were conducted in a building that was adjacent to the police precinct downtown. Our library was in the old armory building. Blacks could not even peddle peanuts at

Fenway Park. But little Jo-Jo White was a major force on the Boston Celtics and "Tiny" Archibald was also playing all kinds of havoc for the Boston Celtics at that time.

And as I speak, it is important to understand that the initial development of the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus is deeply intertwined with the growth of the Department of Sociology, the push for affirmative action, and the recruitment and hiring of persons of color in faculty and staff positions as a whole.

One of my first undertakings was to walk through every one of the four or five buildings that we had on our downtown campus. I walked through every single department and every single administrative unit on the campus. In so doing I met every single department chairperson, and a great deal of the staff on the campus in 1970. But it was appalling for me to discover that with my arrival at Umass Boston there was a total of one and two-thirds Black faculty members on the campus. And how do I get to two-thirds? I was the only Black full-time, tenured professor on this campus. The other people were part-time, working in various departments comprising two-thirds of a position.

There was one exception to what I just said because there was another person on this campus who was, in the language of Creole New Orleans, "passe blanc" meaning, "passing for white." He never identified himself as a member of our group. He did not even want to be identified as a Black person. Monique Garrity, who was one of the part-time persons and who eventually became a tenured professor in economics, knew this

particular person and implored him to become a member of our group, but he steadfastly resisted. To this day, I have never even seen this man. But I do know that he was always counted as "Black" for "affirmative action" purposes.

At the same time that I was making my dismal discovery, I had also met Professor Maryanne Ferguson in the Department of English. She was very much concerned about the problems women were having on this campus, especially in being promoted and being tenured. We joined forces. We sought a meeting with Chancellor Frank Broderick in order to forcefully address the problems we had seen. I knew him from my old Peace Corps days -- I was a Peace Corps director in East Africa in the 1960s while he was a Peace Corps director in West Africa during much of the same period. I remember telling him that because of my own basic philosophy, my own experiences in the Civil Rights Movement and my commitment to diversity and expanding opportunities for Blacks and people of color in colleges and universities, there was no way that I could stay here and be a token in this university! So he said -- and I'm not sure to this day whether he really understood the implications of what he said and the question he raised: What do you want me to do about it? And we said, "We will tell you what to do about it." After talking about this meeting, Maryanne and I established the first Affirmative Action Task Force on this campus. We laid out the plan for what an affirmative action office and Officer ought to do, and where that affirmative action Officer should be located. We were the ones who decided that the locale of that office ought to be in the Office of the Chancellor of the

University so that that person could have direct contact with the Chancellor and not be channeled through another office.

Maryanne Ferguson and I were involved in not only that but in the recruitment of the first affirmative action Officer, and I'll tell you about that momentarily. But in the meantime, I had also met Thor Olsen, who was then serving as the Director of Administration. That position later became known as the Vice Chancellorship for Administration and Finance. I talked to Thor Olsen about what I'd seen: the absence of Black secretaries, the absence of Black support staff, one Black person in the library, and so forth. He was very amenable to the idea that something could be done. One day, shortly after our first meeting, he asked me to arrange a meeting with him. He said, "Look, I have identified a young man from Providence, Rhode Island who I think will be a very good Director of Personnel, who could then help us identify and recruit more clerical and professional staff, and help us in identifying persons of color for faculty positions."

And so in 1971 or 1972, David Edmonds was hired as the very first Personnel Director on this campus. David also joined Maryanne Ferguson and I on the affirmative action Task Force and Search Committee. We were the ones who identified the first person to serve as the affirmative action Officer. Some of you will recall that this position in the early 1970s was a very, very critical and powerful position. Even into the 1980s it was still very powerful. We were fortunate enough to have some very important individuals in that position, including our own professor Robert Johnson. You may not

know that Professor Bob Johnson of the Africana Studies Department is one of our former affirmative action Officers. Joselyn Gant, too, was in that position for quite a long time and did a remarkably fine job.

Let me go back for just a second. In the fall of 1970, Black students were enraged over the lack of Black Studies in any form on this campus. Under considerable pressure, Professor George Goodwin, who was then head of what we called the Division of the Social Sciences, convened a meeting of students and what he labeled "enlightened faculty," whatever that meant, to discuss the idea of expanding course offerings in African-American Studies, and the possibility of recruiting a special staff person to develop a concentration in that area. My suggestion was that Sociology could take the leadership in the development of that program. That idea was accepted at that meeting and, later, by the Department of Sociology.

At the time of that particular meeting I had already met in Washington, D.C., where the Caucus of Black Sociologists was formed, several young Black sociologists, who expressed a real interest in coming to UMass Boston to work with a person who was in my position as Chair of the Department of Sociology in a predominantly white institution. While most of them already had a Ph.D., some were ABDs [all but dissertation]. I reported this information to the Department of Sociology. The department, which was already amenable to the idea of diversity, again articulated its

commitment to that principle. It subsequently became a model, a real model, for how to be successful in the recruitment and the hiring of minorities and women.

For example, in the mid-1970s, as some of you might know, at one point about 33 percent of the members of the Department of Sociology were people of color. We had not recruited any Black women at that time, although about 40 percent of the faculty in that department were women. As more money became available and we began to hire more and more professors, the Department agreed to be active in the formation of the African-American Studies Program, to provide joint appointments wherever possible and to target the African-American Studies concentration as one mechanism for increasing diversity in the Sociology Department.

The Sociology Department recruited Douglas Davidson, who was a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California at Berkeley and then working in Atlanta collecting data for his dissertation. We recruited him into the position of Program Director of the African Studies concentration. I might point out that he was hired on a slot given to the Department of Sociology for the purpose of organizing a concentration in African-American Studies. Therefore, Douglas Davidson had a joint appointment in Sociology and African-American Studies.

In 1971-72, after a few additional faculty and staff of color were hired on this campus, I organized the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus for the following reasons: My colleagues and I wanted to develop a sense of community among Black professionals in a

predominantly white institution. We wanted to institutionalize a mechanism through which persons of color would have a voice in university affairs. We wanted to provide a mentoring vehicle for new faculty, staff and students. We wanted to serve as a force for the continuing recruitment of faculty and staff of color. And, we wanted to be able to attack discrimination and unfair treatment whenever and wherever it occurred.

To achieve these five goals, efforts were made to meet all African-American candidates primarily for positions at UMass Boston so that they could be apprised of the existence of the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus, a community of African-Americans with which they could become affiliated if they so desired.

For several years, let me point out, on a personal level, even beyond the five and a half years I chaired the Department of Sociology, my wife and I would host -- at our own expense, I might add -- a Fall party, for all the new members of the Department of Sociology and all new persons of color who had been hired on this campus. To these functions we also invited the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellors, the Deans and other administrators. I might tell you that, in almost all instances, almost all of them came. As a result, the new faculty and staff were afforded opportunity to network with each other and have face-to-face interactions with the academic administration. These meetings proved to be of immeasurable benefit to everyone.

As the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus gained strength, we began to target those areas in the University in which Black faculty and staff had not been hired or where their under-

representation was particularly severe. So, when the decision was made to hire a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, a newly created position, the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus placed a prior claim on that position because there were no people of color in any high level administrative office on the campus. *We insisted that the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs be a person of color. We especially insisted that the first incumbent of this position should be a Black individual.* The UMB Black faculty/staff caucus takes credit for the hiring of Vice-Chancellor Tubbs as the first UMB Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. He was succeeded, as you know, by Charles Desmond who also did an outstanding job in that position for many years. Between them, they gave structure to that office. They organized student services on campus and created a coherent program that encompassed the whole spectrum of student affairs and service delivery programs. From my perspective, they did exceptionally well!

During the 1970s, the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus also broadened its attention to various forms of student services and organized committees to focus attention on specific areas. These included committees on admissions; how to increase, for example, the number and proportion of persons of color at UMB, committees on advising and mentoring, a Black Studies Advisory Committee, a Black Student Union Advisory Committee, as well as the Joiner Center.

We also made it known that the organization was deeply troubled by the absence of a person of color in positions at the level of a college Dean. Every African-American

candidate who had applied for deanship had been rejected. In some instances, no effort had been made to even conduct a national search that would include not only Black persons, but other persons of color: Asians, Hispanics, Latinos and Native Americans. When Bob Spaethling who was a Professor of German, became the Acting Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, he looked to the Department of Sociology for one of our young talents, Herman James, and appointed him Associate Provost. Herman James became the very first person of color to serve as an Associate Provost at UMass Boston.

And as many of you who know Herman are aware, he was indeed a very, very talented person. After serving as Associate Provost at UMB, Herman went to California State Fullerton to become Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Ultimately, he ended his career, this year, as President of Rowan College in New Jersey where he had been for several years. Those are the kinds of people of color that we had in the Sociology department at that time. But despite Professor Spaethling's commitments to diversity, many departments refused to participate in any effort to recruit and hire persons of color. Several members of those departments actually opposed affirmative action, claiming it was "reverse discrimination." Others of course, sang the familiar hymn: "We can't find any [qualified people of color]." Many of them, also, asserted a philosophical position of claiming the primacy of universalism over particularism. In other words, they argued that standards, whatever those standards were, were always and wrongly lowered for targeted individuals of color but "standards" should be equally applied for all candidates. The

assumption, erroneous as it was, meant that everyone (meaning every white person) whom they selected was a person of high standards -- and I can assure you that they were not! -- but everybody we targeted through affirmative action, for example, was by definition a person of lower qualifications. That was the position taken by those who insisted upon the status quo of maintaining an all Anglo-Saxon Department. And that was the argument that came up time and again at UMB.

I want to show you how ridiculous those actions became. Late in the 1970s, a position opened up for Vice-President for Academic Affairs. We had already demonstrated how we could assist departments to locate "qualified" persons of color. We had helped the University identify a lot of candidates -- persons of color: Blacks, Latinos and Asians; and women. In this case we had in our pool a physicist who was African-American. Mind you, at the time -- and I think that's the case today -- the Physics Department did not have a single Black faculty. This person said, "Well, if I come, I will want a faculty appointment. The Physics Department said, "Well, let's look at this. He's not in the right area. He's a molecular physicist and we don't need anyone in that area." We encouraged the Department to think about diversity and other positive attributes of an extremely attractive and "qualified" candidate. But the people in physics resisted. Ultimately, the selection committee decided against offering this position to an African-American physicist who was a person of impeccable credentials and high standards!

Now, I would like to tell you who he is. Instead of coming here, he went on to become the Director of the famous Argonne Laboratory at the University of Chicago where the atomic bomb was made. Later, he became the Director of the National Science Foundation. Today, he is president of Morehouse College: Dr. Walter E. Massey. UMass Boston once had a chance to get him! But small-minded people decided that they did not want this person of color in that high level administrative position on this campus.

Those were the kinds of reactions that we were beginning to feel as a result of the progress that had been made on this campus between 1971 and 1975. The reaction -- the backlash -- was severe to the point that many departments actually refused to hire any person of color at all. Remember, earlier in this discussion, I said I found a university that was steeped in politics. Fortunately, I also knew something about the machinations of politics because of my six years of working for the federal government as a foreign service officer. It was crucial in that situation to learn something about politics; that is, how political factors intertwine and institutions behave in order to accomplish their goals. Sometimes, goal-attainment necessitates knowledge of how to reach administrators who have final decision-making authority. So, instead of going to the Chancellor, or instead of going to the Deans, I took advantage of the fact that I knew Muriel Snowdon, who was on the University's Board of Trustees, and who had a direct entree to President Robert Wood, head of the entire University of Massachusetts system.

Muriel Snowdon arranged for a surreptitious breakfast meeting, as they would call it today, I would guess -- at her home with University President Robert Wood. Douglas Davidson accompanied me to that meeting. We explained the resistance to hiring and retaining persons of color at UMass Boston as well as the kind of backlash we were experiencing and the increasingly hostile atmosphere developing at this important public institution. President Wood decided, after this discussion, that there was one fundamental way to remedy those problems: he would come to the campus and give an address in which he would state, in effect, that all positions on the campus were frozen. They could only be unfrozen if the targets of faculty hiring were persons of color. Fortunately, he lived up to that promise!

After that address, many persons who wanted some "unfrozen positions" began to come to us. "Help us," they pleaded. We assisted a large number of departments and administrative units on campus to fill positions with outstanding persons of color.

I will come back to that point in just one moment because right now I would like to tell you about other actions we took. In addition to meeting with President Wood, we made use of the print and electronic media to publicize our cause. At the time, *Urban Update* was regularly scheduled for every Saturday night, I think on Channel 7. I don't know how many of you remember that program. We appeared on *Urban Update* to talk about the problems at UMass Boston. We also went to WGBH -- the public affairs station in Boston and other TV stations. We made friends with Sarah Ann Shaw, Charlie

Austin and a number of other persons of color working at the various TV networks. Occasionally they would mention affirmative action programs and potential trouble on the Harbor Campus.

The University, of course, did not want trouble -- did not want all the negative publicity. We, on the other hand were willing to articulate our grievances because we wanted justice and equal opportunity on this campus. We were willing to challenge such false claims as "we can't find any" when we had shown how we could find persons of substance, individuals of exceptional competence, among all races, and gender, if the recalcitrant units were willing to give us a chance.

It is salient at this juncture to mention that in 1973 Bruce Hare, an exceptionally talented University of Chicago ABD was hired in the Department of Sociology. He assumed the responsibility of transforming what had already been a coherent concentration into a full-blown department of African-American Studies. Even as he was writing his doctoral dissertation, Bruce and his colleagues streamlined that program. They developed a rich curriculum as the basis for the formation of a Black Studies Department. They carefully nurtured it and walked it through the Academic Affairs Committee to the point that the Black Studies Department was approved.

It is also important to point out the necessity of having people of color on all academic and administrative committees. Now, I know, it works the daylights out of you to be involved in so many campus committees. But, it was in our best interest to be

involved. I was on the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) during that period. I would like to relate what one particular professor said at the time the Black Studies Department proposal was presented. The AAC had just approved a revamped program in Western Civilization. We had also approved a new course called Chinese "Civilization" as well as other "Civilization" programs or courses. But, when we got to African-American Studies -- and Bruce had included a course called African Civilizations, this person said, "Civilization? Doesn't he mean "experience"? And I said, "If Europeans had a "civilization", then persons of African descent can have a civilization." It is utterly ridiculous to even imply that Africans had no "civilization". Bruce's course was included and the Department was finally approved.

The point is simple: it is important to have someone on decision-making committees who can give a voice to concerns that excluded people have. Recognizing that the small staff in the Black Studies Department limited its opportunities to offer the kind of program that it really wanted for a major, Bruce decided to take a variety of initiatives to increase the department's faculty. For example, he established liaisons with many other departments to facilitate joint appointments and cross-course listings. As a result, numerous courses were cross-listed with Black studies. By way of illustration, Larry Kamara in Sociology taught a course on The Black Family that was cross-listed. Mary Helen Washington taught a course in the English Department. Ed Strickland taught a course in psychology. There were courses in Theatre Arts, Economics and other

departments. Cross-listing courses eliminated a lot of problems. Bruce continually developed the Black Studies academic program. He gave it structure; he gave it organization. He recruited additional faculty and solidified permanence.

But, as always happens, very talented people attract other people to them. Inevitably, Bruce was recognized as a major talent. After about three years here, he joined Stanford University, and, later, accepted a position at the University of Illinois at Urbana. Currently he is a professor at Syracuse University. Other faculty of color accepted positions elsewhere. Their departure forced us to take a hard look at an issue of major significance in institutions of higher education, that is: when people leave, persons of color, or women, one must assess not only the pull factors that attract them to another institution, but also the push factors which may make it easy for them to accept positions elsewhere. What is it about this campus that makes it so easy for people to accept a position somewhere else? Pull factors may be great. But push factors may be equally salient in some situations because, for example, the institutional and/or departmental climate may be hostile. Some people may not like the kind of flack they are taking! They may not like the kind of pettiness that they have to endure on the campus! They may not like the lack of resources. There are all kinds of push and pull factors operable at any time the person makes a decision to leave any campus.

Be that as it may, when Professor Bruce Hare left UMass Boston, the Black Studies Department began to fall on hard times. One reason was the fact that the new

Deans of our college were not as helpful to the Department of Black Studies or even Sociology, for that matter, as they should have been. The Department suffered several retrenchments and a decimation of much needed resources. Consequently, Black students once again became very, very upset, very enraged indeed! It was primarily because of student disenchantment and lack of support from our College Dean that the African-American Studies Advisory Committee decided to seek out a meeting during the early 1980s with Representative Saundra Graham, a member of the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus, to explain to her the kinds of problems the Black Studies Department was experiencing.

We wanted a viable program -- a strong department -- of Black Studies and also an Institute for the Study of Black Culture. We didn't want the Dean to take slots from Black Studies, to decimate it, by not replacing people who left the department. Representative Graham assured us: "It will not happen. I will introduce legislation that will guarantee the existence of Black Studies on your campus in perpetuity. And I will get the money to have an Institute for the Study of Black Culture. It will be a separate institute from the Department of Black Studies." She did just that! The Black Studies department grew and what we now know as the Trotter Institute today was born.

Almost simultaneously something very significant happened: below the surface, as our numbers increased, an intellectual schism within the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus occurred. As we searched for a director for the Institute, there were those persons, on the

one hand, who wanted the new director to be a person whose primary focus was in literature and the arts. On the other hand, there were those of us who said, "We must be practical! We have to confront the society in which we live. We must have a director who knows something about survey research, social science research, and economic development." We needed someone who could reach out to our community, provide the kinds of resources that the community needed and establish strong relationships between the university and the Boston community.

Nevertheless, to make a long story short, "the practical" prevailed. We recruited another sociologist, Dr. Wornie Reed, in 1984 to become the first director of the Trotter Institute and also head Black Studies. It was Wornie Reed with the assistance of his Black Studies Advisory who named the William Monroe Trotter Institute.

Let me remind you that in the late 1980s, the federal government had allocated a considerable amount of money for the study of Black Americans. One of the most publicized projects centered on the theme of *American Dilemma* revisited, so to speak. A carefully chosen group of people was selected to participate in this program. When examining the composition of the committee and its constraints and restraints, one could almost accurately predict the study's outcome before it was even completed. Given this fear, Professor Wornie Reed thought it imperative for the Trotter Institute to take the leadership to conduct a more balanced and objective assessment of the status of Black Americans. He was able to convince an unimaginably large number of scholars of all races

from all across the United States to become part of his assessment group. He organized his group into five basic committees to study the socio-economic, educational and structural status of African-Americans in the United States. These committees closely paralleled the study topics included in the government-sponsored report.

Participants in Reed's endeavor were not given a commission. They worked for free! They participated because they were genuinely committed to a truly objective and comprehensive statement of present-day reality as well as to diversity and equality of opportunity in higher education. They were genuinely committed to increasing the presence of women and persons of color in the academic workplace. They were genuinely committed to access, graduation, diversity and social justice. They did not want to gloss over problems, if they found them; rather, they sought to enlighten the reader on the current life of Black Americans. They produced papers of exceptionally high quality. The Trotter Institute published five volumes which rendered a powerful and insightful assessment of the status of African-Americans. The impact of these studies was widespread not only in terms of the conferences they generated but for the public policy issues they raised, which continue to be debated.

The Trotter Institute also established *The Trotter Review*, which has become a highly respected journal in academia today. The institute began to focus on economic development, the expansion and utilization of community resources, and outreach programs and so forth. It is now apparent that the Institute expanded beyond even our

own expectations. The Sociology Department and the Trotter Institute continued to work together on a variety of enterprises, including, of course, research projects, community outreach activities and other collaborative efforts.

The Black faculty/staff caucus continued to press the university to recruit, hire and tenure faculty and staff of color. Ultimately, persons of color were hired in Sociology, political science, economics, English, psychology, theatre arts, fine art, music, mathematics, French, as well as other departments at UMass Boston. About 7.6 percent of the faculty in the fall of 1976 happened to have been Black, and well over 13 percent were persons of color. By the time I left UMass Boston in December 1989, the percentage of Blacks had not changed appreciably. I think it climbed to 7.9 percent of total faculty. But while in 1976 we only had 356 faculty members, in 1989, almost 900 persons comprised the UMass Boston faculty. 7.9 percent of 900 is a significant increase in actual numbers. Also, if you look at the professional staff, you'll notice some major jumps in the numbers of persons who had been recruited during that time. The professional staff had risen from 0 percent in 1971 to about 5 percent in 1975, to something like 18 or 19 percent in 1989. The numbers had increased dramatically largely because of the work and the commitment that key people on this campus had to diversity.

There always were more women on this campus than persons of color. Thus, if you look at the data from 1976, you'll see that the number of women employed was something like 40.4 percent, I believe. But by 1989 the total number of women had risen

to 47+ percent. Therefore, almost half of all the work force on the campus was comprised of women. Using 1971 as a benchmark, the growth of women in the workforce was quite significant because in 1971 they comprised something like 15-20 percent of the total. Again, that percentage is in contrast to their 47% representation in late 1989. But the question is: where are they now? In what positions are they? Whether looking at classified staff, professional staff, tenured staff, or full professors, where are they? It's not enough to count them. You know the old expression, "location, location, location"? It's about where they are located; that is, at what ranks and what salaries? Where are they on the university's organization chart? That's the kind of thing you need to examine thoroughly.

Future Challenges and Directions

As always, we as academicians and administrative staff at the University are confronted with major challenges as the 21st century approaches. To meet these challenges, I think it is incumbent upon us to continually strive for excellence at the same time that the requirements for "excellence" are constantly expanding. We need to learn -- continually learn -- the rules of the game, and follow them, no matter how they change. The rules may change, but we have to continually master them and always be prepared. Never, ever, sacrifice integrity at the altar of expedience. To faculty members I would say: engage in more research and scholarly productivity; not solely because it is expected,

but because it is your personal desire to expand that knowledge, and your personal desire to be a model of excellence for succeeding generations of students.

The debate, I think, over the utility of affirmative action, is another one of our challenges to confront. We're talking here not only about affirmative action per se. We're talking about diversity, multi-culturalism, and all the other kinds of euphemisms that we use to describe greater equity and inclusion. There is compelling need to get more and more persons of color involved in the affairs of the university.

The gains that were made or stimulated by Justice Powell's decision in the Bakke case are seriously threatened by decisions in the Hopwood case in Texas and by the *Podberesky vs. Kirwin* case in Maryland, as well as by Proposition 209 in California. Nevertheless, support for affirmative action by the electorate in Houston informs us that responses to propositions about affirmative action and diversity are deeply influenced by the language of such propositions. Supporters must now reshape the language of affirmative action. As in the case in survey research the outcome is almost always a function of how questions are posed. Who poses the questions? Retrieve! Refocus that debate, get in the forefront of the debate and shape the questions posed about the utility, functions and need for affirmative action.

The Hopwood and Podberesky cases are being used by some institutions to retreat from initiatives to which they were not firmly committed in the first place. However, there is also ample evidence that many universities are continuing to use targeted scholarships

and targeted recruitment and, of course, successful programs to recruit and retain persons of color into higher education. Many universities are using initiatives such as tuition waivers in order to attract and retain more students of color in graduate and professional schools programs. Keep in mind that diversity should not be designed for a single targeted group. That is, it is not meant to be exclusively for women any more than it should be the primary domain for persons of color. Rather, diversity initiatives must be inclusive if the university is genuinely interested in attracting and utilizing the best available talent. Otherwise, it is a complete sham.

The Black Faculty/Staff Caucus at any University has a responsibility, I think, to do whatever is possible to attract more students of color into their universities and improve the students' graduation rates. The UMass Boston Caucus, I believe, has the responsibility to attract more and more persons of color into the education programs on this campus, such as the K through 12 program, and to attract more and more persons of color into the teaching profession. This should be done not only because teaching is a "noble profession" but also because the need is imperative at this time. Let me point out to you that at the K through 12 level right now, I believe, there is already a shortage of something like 2.7 million teachers. If that shortage continues, by the turn of the century we won't have enough persons of color to work in urban communities to teach young people. You see, we won't have enough college professors who are persons of colors to

go into universities and stave off excuses such as "We can't find any." The implications of that problem are staggering!

Again, it is in the nation's best interest to train more and more persons of color not only in education, but also in physics, the natural sciences, engineering, information technology and throughout the whole spectrum of knowledge. I point out to you that -- and I emphasize this -- we can use targeted scholarships. People who say we can't use them are only using a legalistic kind of rationalization to do nothing. But it can be done -- it is being done by those who are genuinely committed to diversity.

There is compelling need I think, to move more and more persons of color into upper level administrative, executive and managerial positions in which crucial decisions that affect all members of the University community are made. But, let me warn you to be careful in doing this because of the fact that in the efforts of the powers that be to placate the cherubs who may be rumbling, you may get an ineffective, forceless, powerless person who really does not have your interests at heart. You may get individuals who are selfishly motivated and who are only oriented toward personal rewards. These individuals will not be of any use to you. Therefore it is sometimes better to wait and fight to get the right person in the right position at the right time. And, always demand the best of standards from all our leaders, faculty and students!

Finally, remember that we are living in a global society, a technological, cyberspace community, which places new demands and new dynamics upon us. It is

imperative to be familiar with the new technologies, with new research, to be both producers and consumers of research, to produce new innovative programs, to venture out on new career paths, and, of course, to produce sound scholarship. Equally important, it is imperative to transcend petty differences, to eschew small stake games -- because that's all they are, small stake games -- and to rise above ideological and gender turfs in order to become enduring, contributing members of substance in this global society.

Thank you very much.